

Interim work: In-group and Out-group Bias

The In-Group bias is activated when we are asked to decide, for instance, on who should be trusted, allocation of resource or who we want to work with. The result is an unconscious belief that our own social group are more trustworthy, smarter etc. without any good evidence. As a result we treat people from our own group better than we treat those from other, equivalent groups. (Riddell, 2021)

This effect has been researched by many psychologists and is linked to group conflict, prejudice, stereotypes and generalisations.

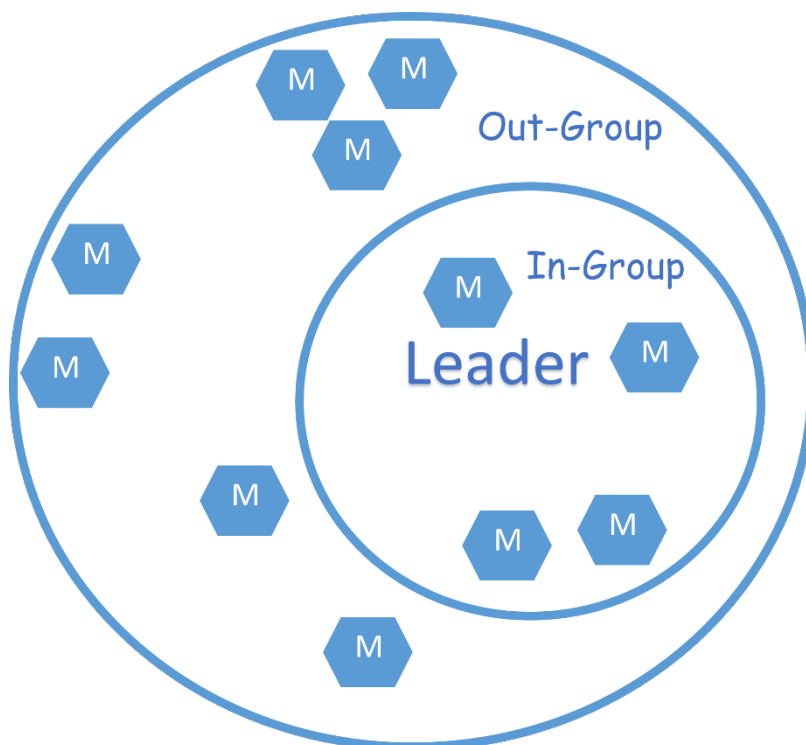
Members from In-Groups: receive more information and concern from the leader, have more influence, are more like the leader in terms of personality. They are highly involved and more communicative than the Out-Group. **As team leaders we identify ourselves more with this group.**

Members from Out-Groups: we have less interaction with them, less small talk.
As team leaders we see this group as different from ourselves.

Task: Take a piece of paper and draw yourself in the middle of the paper. Then position your team members around you, the ones you have most contact with closer to you, and the ones you have less interaction with, away from you. You might also position the members of your team closer to each other if they have more interaction between them. This will allow you to notice if you have any sub-groups within your team.

Look at your drawing and ask yourself who is in your In-Group and who in your Out-Group.

- How does this impact your behaviour towards them?
- How does it affect group dynamics?
- What are the identity characteristics and other variants that make them similar/different to you?"



Leadership Behaviours for cultivating Psychological Safety

To develop a high-performance, psychologically safe environment for teaming and learning, do the following:

Be accessible and approachable	Leaders encourage team members to learn together by being accessible and personally involved.
Acknowledge the limits of current knowledge	When leaders admit that they don't know something, their genuine display of humility encourages other team members to follow suit.
Be willing to display fallibility	To create psychological safety, team leaders must demonstrate a tolerance of failure by acknowledging their own fallibility.
Invite participation	When people believe their leaders value their input, they're more engaged and responsive.
Highlight failures as learning opportunities	Instead of punishing people for well-intentioned risks that 'backfire', leaders encourage team members to embrace error and deal with failure in a productive manner.
Use direct language	Using direct, actionable language instigates the type of straightforward, blunt discussion that enables learning.
Set boundaries	When leaders are as clear as possible about what is acceptable, people feel more psychologically safe than when boundaries are vague or unpredictable.
Hold people accountable for transgressions	When people cross boundaries set in advance and fail to perform up to set standards, leaders must hold them accountable in a fair and consistent way.

From "Teaming", Edmondson C., Wiley & Sons, 2012, p 139

Self-reflection:

- What leadership behaviours do you already apply?
- What leadership behaviours would you need to develop to cultivate Psychological Safety within your team?
- How can you do that? What will be your next step?

- **What specific actions can you take to foster psychological safety in a diverse team?**
- **To what extent do you actively encourage diverse perspectives and explain the value of diversity for team performance and innovation?**
- **“How do you create space for team members to play devil’s advocate?”**